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NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS

Kant's Teleologie. Door C. PEKELHARING. P. Noordhoff, Groningen, 1916.—pp. iv, 243.

The purpose of the author, as stated in the final pages of the book, is to show, first, that Kant committed a serious methodological error in neglecting to determine the characteristics of aim or purpose; secondly, that his attempt to systematize aims was foreordained to fail, since, as he himself states, everything in nature can be viewed as a means to an end; and, thirdly, that his principle of formal *Zweckmässigkeit* (in the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*) led Kant into serious error, which would have been avoided if he had realized that this principle, instead of being an independent and coördinate principle, is simply a corollary of the principle of causation. In the *Introduction* the author submits an interpretation of aim or purpose, which, in his view, presents the following characteristics: (1) The improbability that the result is *accidentally* produced by the antecedents, (2) the improbability that the result is due to an underlying physical cause or group of physical causes, and (3) the fact that the result is of some value to some being (pp. 3, 4). That these characteristics may be possessed by processes to which we can not ascribe consciousness is genially admitted by the author; and the limitation placed upon the possible achievements of physical causes is in no wise reconciled with the doctrine (*cf.* pp. 108–112) that no limit must be placed upon these causes, since mechanical and teleological explanations simply represent parallel and harmonious points of view, after the manner of the 'double aspect' theory of consciousness and matter. This insight into the nature of teleology was made possible by the work of Kant, though he himself never attained to it. Alongside this doctrine of purpose the author offers an interpretation of 'explanation' which, as he contends, goes beyond Kant in that it makes his principle of formal *Zweckmässigkeit* entirely superfluous. Man has an *a priori* conviction of the permanent and indestructible identity of all that exists. From this conviction it follows that all change is logical in character, that the new occurrence is simply the old in a new form. In other words, the new is found to be identical with the old plus the cause of the change (*cf.* p. 125). This insight is gained by the discovery of the underlying laws of nature. By constantly increasing the scope of our generalizations the logical character of all change becomes increasingly evident. Since this procedure is based upon our antecedent *a priori* conviction regarding identity, Kant's principle of formal *Zweckmässigkeit* turns out to be merely a piece of useless machinery. But here again it is to Kant's achievement that we are indebted for the new outlook upon the subject. The author's evident admiration for Kant would be more impressive if he himself had escaped the rationalism in which Kant

remained entangled and if his book did not so completely ignore the more recent philosophical movements and discussions that have affected so profoundly the status of his problem.

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The Philosophy of William James. By TH. FLOURNOY. Authorized Translation by EDWIN B. HOLT and WILLIAM JAMES, Junior. New York, 1917.—pp. vii, 246.

Commentaries upon philosophers whose own writings are popular in style are likely to be superfluous. This book, however, is an exception. Many, though recognizing the charm of James's personality, and the brilliance of his work as a psychologist, have, on account of the unmethodical character of his philosophical writings, supposed that they contained no coherent system of thought. Professor Flournoy, on the contrary, has succeeded in discovering in them a fairly well articulated philosophy and James's permanent philosophical reputation will owe much to this interpretation by his Swiss friend. The English translation has the advantage of being able to employ James's picturesque terminology in his own language.

The development of James's philosophy, which "rests entirely upon his psychology" (p. 209), is largely the result of his naturally artistic temperament (which enabled him to understand and portray all kinds of minds) combined with the respect for scientific precision that he learned from Agassiz. The latter, too, taught him to despise abstract generalizations and to love the concrete and particular. His Swedenborgian environment early turned his attention to a serious study of types of religious experience, and Renouvier led him to reject monism. James's 'pragmatism' accordingly emphasizes particular facts and definite consequences, and reasons that since man thinks in order to live his ideas have a biological function by which their truth is to be tested. His 'radical empiricism' differs from traditional empiricism in regarding mental life as originally a 'stream of consciousness' containing both facts and relations. Truth is a relation between elements within the stream and has no transcendent reference. 'Pluralism' follows—since the stream contains great diversity of phenomena—and 'tychism'—since new creations constantly arise within the stream that viewed externally appear to be chance, and which internally are spontaneity and freedom. Here James anticipated Bergson. Such a view makes a systematic ethic impossible, but recognizes 'meliorism'; since the stream is plastic, it is always possible to improve it, *e. g.* by seeking a moral equivalent for war. Such a view of the world excludes an idealistic Absolute, but leaves room for a kind of theism. The phenomena of religious experience suggest the hypothesis of a supersensible consciousness (God or gods) exercising influence upon individuals through the subconsciousness.

Though always sympathetic, Professor Flournoy does not conceal some of James's more serious defects as a philosopher,—his superficiality, his pluralistic